

NEW ENGLAND NOTE

DISCOVERY OF *SPOROBOLUS ASPER*
(POACEAE) IN MAINE

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On September 26, 1984, we discovered a small population of *Sporobolus asper* (Michx.) Kunth at a botanically diverse riverbank of the Aroostook River in Wade, Aroostook County, Maine. The species was not mentioned in Richards et al. (1983), and no prior Maine collection records of it were found at NEBC and MAINE. This population thus represents the first for the species in Maine.

Sporobolus asper was growing in stony alluvium and bedrock crevices within prairie-like vegetation of short, native graminoids along a series of flood-scoured bedrock ledges at 46°46'N, 68°12'W, and at an elevation of 140 m. The vegetation was dominated by the low, mat-forming grass, *Muhlenbergia richardsonis* (Trin.) Rydb. Other associates were *Scirpus clintonii* Gray, *Scirpus cespitosus* L., *Allium schoenoprasum* L. var. *sibiricum* (L.) Hartman, *Potentilla fruticosa* L., *Potentilla arguta* Pursh, *Deschampsia cespitosa* (L.) Beauv., *Spartina pectinata* Link, *Muhlenbergia glomerata* (Willd.) Trin., *Rosa blanda* Ait., *Prunus pumila* L. var. *depressa* (Pursh) Gleason, *Campanula rotundifolia* L., and *Lobelia kalmii* L.

Sporobolus asper was not included in a list of New England rare and endangered plants (Crow et al., 1981), but nevertheless might be regarded as a rarity throughout New England. The species is extant at a single Vermont station (*Zika* 7770, VT), and is considered endangered in this state (Everett Marshall, pers. comm.). The species is not known to be extant in Massachusetts (Bruce Sorrie, pers. comm.), Connecticut (Les Mehrhoff and Ron Rozsa, pers. comm.), and Rhode Island (Richard Enser, pers. comm.). Collection records indicate a historic distribution of 10 towns in Massachusetts (NEBC, GH), 17 towns in Connecticut (NEBC, GH, CONN), and three towns in Rhode Island (NEBC, GH). *Sporobolus asper* has not been reported from New Hampshire.

In New Brunswick, Canada, *Sporobolus asper* was considered

rare (Hinds, 1983), and is now thought to be extirpated (Harold Hinds, pers. comm.). In New York State, distribution records of this species on file at the New York State Museum show 46 different collection sites, most of them from the eastern part of the state. *Sporobolus asper* is not considered rare in New York (Steve Clemants, pers. comm.).

Sporobolus asper has been ranked S1 (state endangered) by the Maine Natural Heritage Program (Amy Forrester, pers. comm.). The Wade specimen is deposited at NEBC (*Rawinski, Rasmussen & Rooney 2179*, NEBC).

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